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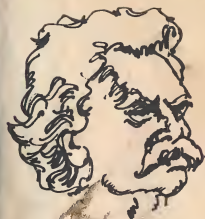
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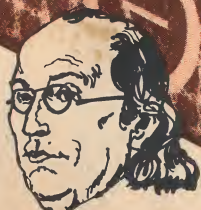
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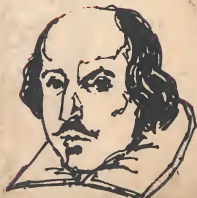
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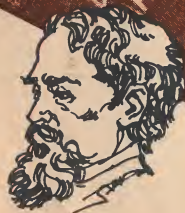
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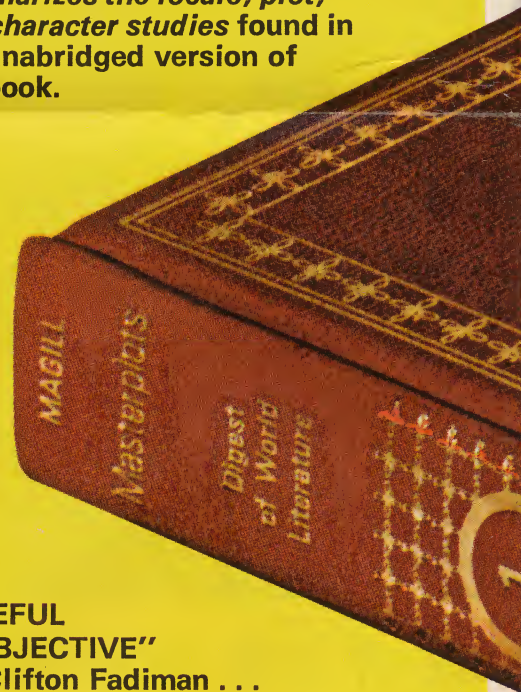
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Type of work: Novel  
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Locale: France and England  
First published: 1859

Principal characters  
DR. MANETTE, a former  
LUCIE MANETTE, his daughter  
MR. LORRY, an agent  
CHARLES DARNAY  
SYDNEY CARTON  
MISS PROSS, a French  
MADAME DEFEVER  
M. DEFEVER

• Basic Idea  
of Book

Critique:  
Dickens is a remarkable  
Although one may complete  
characters in his stories,  
necessary to complete  
Dickens plot. In this  
Revolution, Dickens  
complicated plot,  
draws toward one  
the greater dramatic  
lightful and fast

• Summary of  
Story

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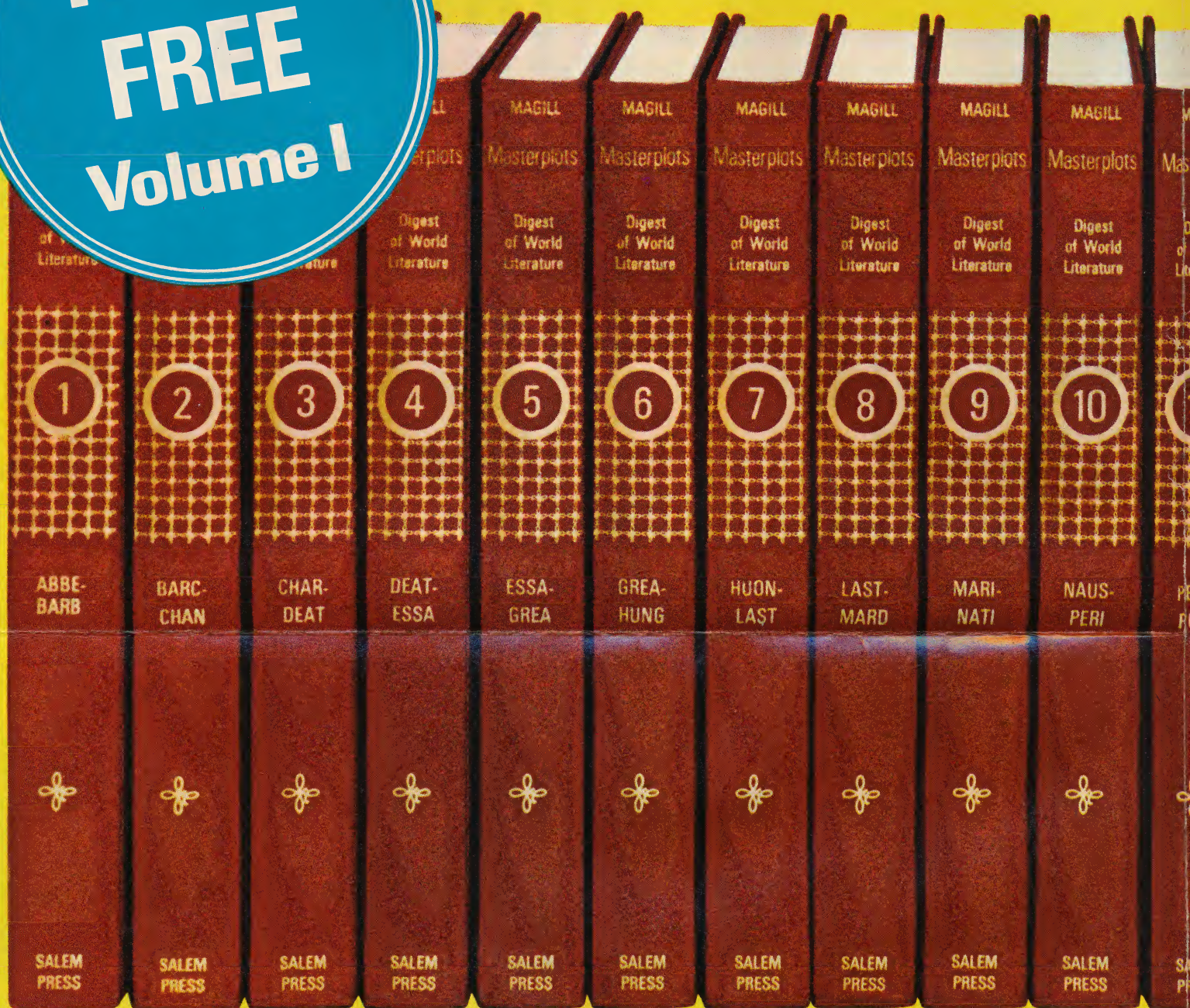
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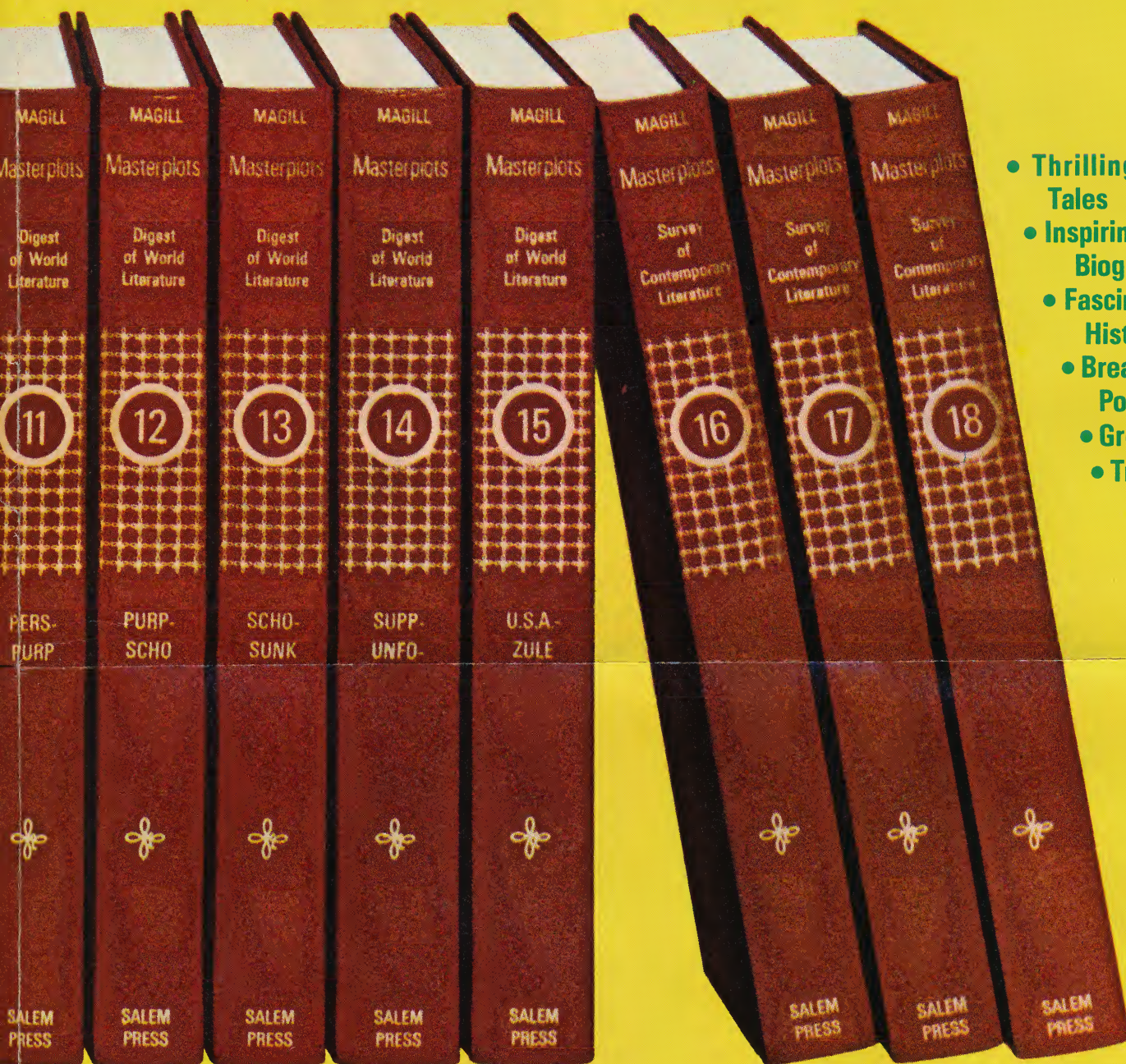
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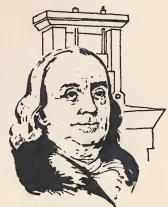
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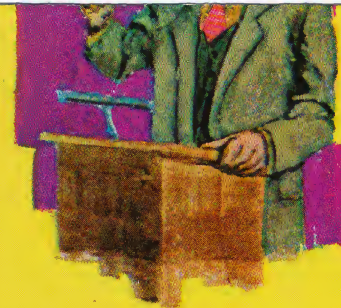
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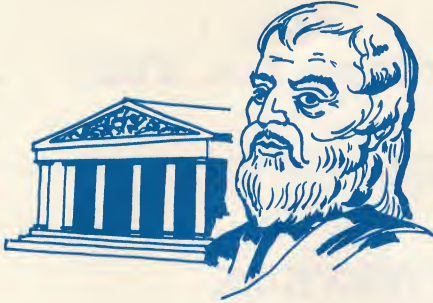
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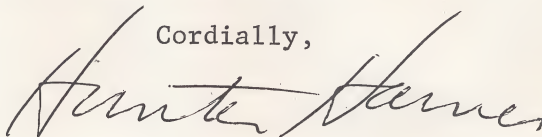
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sad had brought charges against him. Lucie and her father had testified they had met Darnay on the boat when they had traveled from France five years earlier. But an unusual circumstance saved the prisoner. Mr. Stryver, the prisoner's counsel, pointed across the courtroom to another man who so resembled the prisoner that legal identification of Darnay was shaken. The other man was Sydney Carton, and because of the likeness between the two Mr. Stryver secured an acquittal for the prisoner. Carton's relationship to Stryver was that of the jackal to the lion, for the alcoholic, aimless Carton wrote the cases which Stryver pleaded in court.

Lucie and her father lived in a small tenement under the care of their maid, Miss Pross, and their kindly friend, Mr. Lorry. Jerry Cruncher, porter at Tellson & Co., and a secret resurrectionist, was often helpful. Darnay and Carton became frequent callers in the Manette household, after the trial which had brought them together.

In France the fury of the people grew. Monseigneur the Marquis St. Evrémonde, was driving in his carriage through the countryside when he carelessly killed a child of a peasant named Gaspard. The nobleman returned to his castle to meet his nephew, who was visiting from England. Charles Darnay's views differed from those of his uncle. Darnay knew that his family had committed grave injustices, for which he begged his uncle to make amends. Monseigneur the marquis haughtily refused. That night the marquis was murdered in his bed.

Darnay returned to England to seek Dr. Manette's permission to court Lucie. In order to construct a bond of complete honesty, Darnay attempted to tell the doctor his true French name, but Manette fearfully asked him to wait until the morning of his marriage before revealing it. Carton also approached Lucie with a proposal of marriage. When Lucie refused, Carton asked her always to remember that there was a man who would

give his own life to keep a life she loved beside her.

Meanwhile in France Madame Defarge knitted into her scarf the story of the hated St. Evrémondes. Gaspard had been hanged for the assassination of the marquis; monseigneur's house must be destroyed. John Barsad, the spy, brought news that Lucie Manette would marry Charles Darnay, nephew of the marquis. This news disturbed Defarge, for Dr. Manette, a former prisoner of the Bastille, held a special honor in the eyes of the Revolutionists.

Lucie and Darnay were married. Sydney Carton became a loyal friend of the family. Time passed, and tiny Lucie arrived. When the child was six years old, in the year 1789, the French people stormed the Bastille. At the Bastille Defarge went to the cell where Dr. Manette had been a prisoner and extracted some papers hidden behind a stone in the wall.

One day, while Darnay was talking to Mr. Lorry at Tellson & Co., a letter addressed to the Marquis St. Evrémonde was placed on Mr. Lorry's desk. Darnay offered to deliver it to the proper person. When he was alone, he read the letter. It was from an old family servant who had been imprisoned by the Revolutionists. He begged the Marquis St. Evrémonde to save his life. Darnay realized that he must go to Paris. Only Dr. Manette knew of Darnay's family name, and the doctor had been sworn to secrecy.

Darnay and Mr. Lorry went to Paris, the latter to look after the French branch of Tellson & Co. Shortly after his arrival Darnay was seized as an undesirable immigrant after Defarge had ordered his arrest. Mr. Lorry was considerably upset when Lucie and Dr. Manette suddenly arrived in Paris. Some of the doctor's friends had informed him of Darnay's arrest. The old man felt that his own imprisonment in the Bastille would win the sympathy of the Revolutionists and enable him to save his son-in-law.

After fifteen months of waiting, Darnay was brought to trial. Able to prove

(Story Continues on  
Two More Pages)

## Typical Pages from Frank N. Magill's Masterplots

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### OUR TOWN

Type of work: Drama  
Author: Thornton Wilder (1897- )  
Type of plot: Domestic romance  
Time of plot: 1901-1913  
Locale: New Hampshire  
First presented: 1938

#### Principal characters:

DR. GIBBS, a physician  
MRS. GIBBS, his wife  
GEORGE, and  
REBECCA, their children  
MR. WEBB, a newspaper editor  
MRS. WEBB, his wife  
EMILY, and  
WALLY, their children  
SIMON STIMSON, director of the choir

#### Critique:

This play won the Pulitzer Prize in 1938. Portraying typical American small-town life, the play employs a minimum of scenery. A stage manager remains informally on the stage throughout the play and helps to explain much of the action. The tender and simple love story of George Gibbs and Emily Webb is the thread upon which the plot is strung. *Our Town* is an exceptionally fresh retelling of a timeless, nostalgic story.

#### The Story:

Early one morning in 1901 Dr. Gibbs returned to his home in Grover's Corners, New Hampshire. He had just been across the tracks to Polish Town to deliver Mrs. Goruslowski's twins. On the street he met Joe Crowell, the morning paper boy, and Howie Newsome, the milkman. The day's work was beginning in Grover's Corners.

Mrs. Gibbs had breakfast ready when her husband arrived, and she called the children, George and Rebecca, to the table. After breakfast the children left for school in the company of the Webb children, Wally and Emily, who lived across the way.

After the children had gone, Mrs.

Gibbs stepped out to feed her chickens. Seeing Mrs. Webb stringing beans in her back yard, she crossed over to talk with her. Mrs. Gibbs had been offered three hundred and fifty dollars for some antique furniture; she would sell the furniture, she had decided, if she could get Dr. Gibbs to take a vacation with her. But Dr. Gibbs had no wish to take a vacation; if he could visit the Civil War battlegrounds every other year, he was satisfied.

The warm day passed, and the children began to come home from school. Emily Webb walked home alone pretending she was a great lady. George Gibbs, on his way to play baseball, stopped to talk to Emily and told her how much he admired her success at school. He could not, he insisted, imagine how anyone could spend so much time over homework as she did. Flattered, Emily promised to help George with his algebra. He said that he did not really need school work, because he was going to be a farmer as soon as he graduated from high school.

When George had gone, Emily ran to her mother and asked if she were pretty enough to make boys notice her. Grudgingly, her mother admitted that

she was, but Mrs. Webb tried to turn Emily's mind to other subjects.

That evening, while Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Gibbs were at choir practice, George and Emily sat upstairs studying. Their windows faced each other, and George called to Emily for some advice on his algebra. Emily helped him, but she was more interested in the moonlight. When she called George's attention to the beautiful night, he seemed only mildly interested.

The ladies coming home from choir practice gossiped about their leader, Simon Stimson. He drank most of the time, and for some reason he could not adjust himself to small-town life. The ladies wondered how it would all end. Mr. Webb also wondered. He was the editor of the local paper; and, as he came home, he met Simon roaming the deserted streets. When Mr. Webb reached his home, he found Emily still gazing out of her window at the moon—and dreaming.

At the end of his junior year in high school George was elected president of his class, and Emily was elected secretary-treasurer. When George walked home with Emily after the election, she seemed so cold and indifferent that George asked for an explanation. She told him that all the girls thought him conceited and stuck-up because he cared more for baseball than he did for his friends. She expected men to be perfect, like her father and his.

George said that men could not be perfect, but that women could—like Emily. Then Emily began to cry, insisting that she was far from perfect. George offered to buy her a soda. As they drank their sodas, they found that they really had liked each other for a long time. George said he thought he would not go away to agricultural school, after all. When he graduated from high school, he would start right in working on the farm.

After a time Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs learned that George wanted to marry

Emily as soon as he left high school. At first it was a shock to them, for they could not imagine that George was anything but a child. They wondered how he could provide for a wife; whether Emily could take care of a house. Then Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs remembered their own first years of married life. They had had troubles, but now they felt that the troubles had been overshadowed by their joys. They decided that George could marry Emily if he wished.

On the morning of his wedding day George dropped in on Mr. and Mrs. Webb, and Mrs. Webb left the men alone so that her husband could advise George. But all that Mr. Webb had to say was that no one could advise anyone else on matters as personal as marriage.

When George had gone, Emily came down to her last breakfast in her parents' home. Both she and Mrs. Webb cried. Mrs. Webb had meant to give her daughter some advice on marriage, but she was unable to bring herself to it.

At the church, just before the ceremony, both Emily and George felt as if they were making a mistake; they did not want to get married. By the time the music started, however, both of them were calm. The wedding ceremony was soon over. And Grover's Corners lost one of its best baseball players.

Nine years passed; it was the summer of 1913. Up in the graveyard above the town the dead lay, resting from the cares of their lives on earth. Now there was a new grave; Emily had died in childbirth and George was left alone with his four-year-old son.

It was raining as the funeral procession wound its way up the hill to the new grave. Then Emily appeared shyly before the other dead. Solemnly they welcomed her to her rest. But she did not want to rest; she wanted to live over again the joys of her life. It was possible to do so, but the others warned her against trying to relive a day in her mortal life.

Emily chose to live over her twelfth

birthday. At first it was exciting to be young again, but the excitement wore off quickly. The day held no joy, now that Emily knew what was in store for the future. It was unbearably painful to realize how unaware she had been of the meaning and wonder of life while she was alive. Simon Stimson, a suicide, told her that life was like that, a time of ignorance and blindness and folly. He

was still bitter in death.

Emily returned to her resting place. When night had fallen, George approached full of grief and threw himself on Emily's grave. She felt pity for him and for all the rest of the living. For now she knew how little they really understood of the wonderful gift that is life itself.

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

*Type of work:* Novel

*Author:* Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

*Type of plot:* Historical romance

*Time of plot:* French Revolution

*Locale:* France and England

*First published:* 1859

### *Principal characters*

DR. MANETTE, a former prisoner in the Bastille

LUCIE MANETTE, his daughter

MR. LORRY, an agent of Tellson & Co.

CHARLES DARNAY, Marquis St. Evrémonde

SYDNEY CARTON, a lawyer's clerk

MISS PROSS, a servant

MADAME DEFARGE, a French revolutionary

M. DEFARGE, her husband

### *Critique:*

Dickens is a remarkable story-teller. Although one may complain of the many characters in his stories, each character is necessary to complete the pattern of the Dickens plot. In this novel of the French Revolution, Dickens' treatment of his complicated plot, every event of which draws toward one great climax against the greater drama of history, is both delightful and fascinating to experience.

### *The Story:*

The early rumbling of the French Revolution was echoing across the English Channel. In Paris a lonely old man waited in an attic for his first meeting with a daughter whom he had not seen since she was a baby. With the aid of Mr. Jarvis Lorry, an agent for the Franco-

British banking house of Tellson & Co., the lovely Lucie Manette had been brought to Paris to find her father, imprisoned for eighteen years in the Bastille. Above the wine shop of Madame and M. Defarge, Dr. Manette was kept secretly until his rescuers could take him safely back to England. Day after day Madame Defarge sat outside her wine shop, knitting into a long scarf strange symbols which would later spell out a death list of hated aristocrats.

Five years later Lucie Manette sat beside her father in the courtroom of the Old Bailey, where Charles Darnay, a teacher of languages, was on trial for treasonable activities which involved his passing between France and England on secret business. A man named John Bar-